



Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE FORENSIC SCIENCE STANDARDS BOARD

This document sets out the framework from which the OSAC Forensic Science Standards Board (FSSB) shall operate and outlines the organizational authority, composition, terms of office, tasks and practical rules regarding the FSSB. In addition to these Terms of Reference, the FSSB shall adhere to the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws*.

1. Purpose

The FSSB shall be the mechanism by which the Administrator (NIST) gains forensic science community input into the management and administration of the Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC).

The aims of the FSSB are to:

- Facilitate the promulgation of standards and guidelines that will support the development of quality benchmarks and enhance consistency across the forensic science industry
- Discuss and address issues related to the OSAC standards and guidelines development process
- Coordinate the activities of the OSAC Resource Committees, Scientific Area Committees (SACs) and SAC Subcommittees.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- The FSSB shall be responsible for coordinating the efforts of the Resource Committees, Scientific Area Committees (SACs), the SAC Subcommittees and all Task Groups.
- The FSSB will also be responsible for:
 - Determining the overall direction of the OSAC
 - Developing OSAC policies and procedures
 - Documenting Priority Action Plans and topics for SACs, and SAC Subcommittees
 - Identifying gaps in the existing body of standards and guidelines
 - Reviewing and approving all standards and guidelines for listing on the *OSAC Registry*
 - Ensuring that standards or guidelines identified by a SAC that may affect another SAC or SAC Subcommittee are vetted by that component and managing any conflicting requirements
 - Supporting the work of SACs and SAC Subcommittees by providing advice and assistance
 - Ensuring communication flow among SACs, the FSSB, the Resource Committees and the forensic science community
 - Reporting FSSB activity and decisions to the forensic science community and its stakeholders
 - Executing the appeals process for unresolved comment and adjudication and for Membership matters.

2.1 FSSB Task Groups

As needed, Task Groups of the FSSB shall be established by the FSSB Chair and their activities administered by the FSSB Vice-Chair. FSSB Task Groups must be chaired by an FSSB Member. FSSB Task Group Members must include OSAC Members and may include Affiliate members.

3. Membership

The FSSB shall consist of the Chairs of each Scientific Area Committee (SAC), six (6) representatives from professional forensic science organizations (American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS), American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD), Association of Firearm and Toolmark Examiners (AFTE), International Association for Identification (IAI), National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME), Society of Forensic Toxicologists, Inc. (SOFT) and five (5) Members-at-large, one NIST representative (Ex-Officio Member) and three (3) Resource Committee Chairs. All Members of the FSSB will initially be appointed by NIST. Future vacancies will be filled in accordance with the OSAC Charter and Bylaws.

4. Organizational Authority

FSSB oversees and coordinates the following OSAC units:

- Resource Committees
- Scientific Area Committees (SACs)
- SAC Subcommittees
- Task Groups of the FSSB.

5. Operation

5.1 Executive Board

- The Executive Board of the FSSB shall consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Executive Secretary and the Ex-Officio. The Ex-Officio shall represent NIST. This individual may participate in debate and making formal motions.
- The FSSB Chair is the first among equals on the Board and shall be responsible for managing the activities of the Board. These duties include, but are not limited to, approval of Board meeting agendas, presiding over Board meetings, inviting guests to FSSB meetings and coordinating communication between FSSB and other OSAC units.
- The FSSB Vice-Chair shall execute the FSSB Chair's role in the absence of the Chair. The FSSB Vice-Chair shall manage all FSSB Task Group activities.
- The Executive Secretary of the FSSB shall assist with agenda development and distribution, meeting planning and facilitation, meeting minutes and document distribution.

5.2 Terms of Office

5.2.1 FSSB Members

- FSSB Members are appointed by the FSSB Nominations Task Group, as positions become available. (Refer to the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws* for more details on the nomination and selection process.)
- After initial staggered 2, 3 and 4 year appointments, the terms of the FSSB Members shall be 3 years and shall commence at the beginning of the Federal fiscal year. An individual appointed to fill a vacated position shall serve the balance of the term.

- In the event of a vacancy of any Member position on the FSSB, the vacancy shall be filled in accordance with the procedure outlined in the OSAC Charter and Bylaws.
- A FSSB Member may be terminated for insufficient participation or for cause as specified in the *OSAC Charter and Bylaws*. Such termination requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the FSSB.

5.2.2 FSSB Officers

- SAC Chairs may not hold an officer position on the FSSB.
- The terms of FSSB Executive Board officers shall be a fixed term of three (3) years.
- An elected officer serving a two (2)-year term (as defined in 5.2.1) can be considered for reappointment for another three (3)-year term and, if appointed, can be eligible for reelection as an officer.
- Officers shall be elected by the FSSB Membership as terms end.
- FSSB Members may only hold/fill one Executive officer position at a time.
- In the event of disengagement or withdrawal of the FSSB Chair, the title and all duties and obligations shall be assumed by the FSSB Vice-Chair until the FSSB elects a new Chair.

5.3 FSSB Meetings

FSSB meetings shall be closed to the public.

5.3.1 Participation

- Two-thirds (2/3) of the FSSB Membership shall represent a quorum. A quorum is required to conduct business in which a vote is required.
- FSSB Members participation is critical. All FSSB Members shall attend as many of the meetings as possible.
- Active, healthy debate is encouraged; once a decision is made, the FSSB speaks with one voice.
- Meetings will be attended by FSSB Members and invited guests.
- Up to five (5) guests may be invited to participate in FSSB meetings. Invitations will be extended by the FSSB Chair or designee for in-person meetings, invitations may only be extended after travel authorization is approved by NIST.

5.3.2 Frequency

- There shall be a minimum of four (4) FSSB meetings per year.
- Additional meetings may be arranged, as needed, to address issues as they arise or to provide status updates
- Special meetings may be called by the Chair with at least 48 hours' notice.

5.3.3 Venue

- The FSSB may meet in person or virtually using teleconference and webconferencing technology.
- NIST shall determine the venue for any in-person meetings.

5.3.4 Manner of Acting

- When deemed necessary by the Chair, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed.

5.3.5 Agendas

- Topics may come from NIST, FSSB Members, and Chairs of the Resource Committees.
- The agenda shall be distributed prior to the start of each FSSB meeting by the FSSB Executive Secretary.

5.3.6 Minutes

- The FSSB Executive Secretary (or designee) shall take the minutes from the FSSB meeting which are to be distributed to the FSSB Membership prior to, and approved by the FSSB Members at their next meeting.
- The minutes of the FSSB meeting shall be distributed to the FSSB, Chairs of the Resource Committees and the Chairs of the SAC Subcommittees within thirty (30) days of approval.

6. Voting

- Each Member shall have one (1) vote. FSSB Members who will not be present for an in-person or virtual meeting may notify the FSSB Executive Secretary of his/her vote in advance of the meeting.
- Proxy voting is permitted and contributes to the voting quorum.
- The NIST Ex-Officio Member will abstain from voting with the exception of breaking a tie vote.
- Two-thirds (2/3) of the FSSB Members shall represent a voting quorum. A majority vote of the quorum is required unless otherwise specified.
- A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the FSSB is required to approve a standard or guideline on the OSAC Registry.
- Votes may take place during FSSB meetings or via an electronic poll.

7. Representation and Communication

- The FSSB Chair, or designee, shall be invited to represent OSAC at the request of NIST.
- A FSSB Member shall provide public statements representing OSAC policies or positions only upon approval of NIST.

8. Amendment, Modification or Variation

These Terms of Reference may be amended, varied, or modified in writing upon a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the full FSSB.